



## **Tyramine Restricted**

### **Monoamine Oxidase Inhibitor (MAOI) Diet**

#### **General Description**

The diet limits foods that are major sources of tyramine. Tyramine is found in foods that are fermented, aged, or spoiled.

#### **Indication for Use**

Tyramine is a decarboxylated product of the amino acid tyrosine. Normally, an enzyme, monoamine oxidase, found in the digestive tract keeps tyramine levels within a safe range. When patients take monoamine oxidase inhibitors, this enzyme is deactivated and tyramine builds up. Increased tyramine levels can cause potentially serious reactions such as hypertension, headaches, heart problems, nausea, vomiting, visual disturbances, and confusion. The MAOI diet is used to prevent these side effects.

#### **Nutritional Adequacy**

In comparison to the Recommended Dietary Allowances, this diet is nutritionally adequate with the same exceptions as for the regular diet.

#### **Guidelines**

Patients should avoid all foods in the "Foods to Avoid" list. Only freshly prepared, properly stored foods should be consumed.

#### **FOODS TO AVOID (All contain >6 mg tyramine/serving)**

- All aged and mature cheeses. (Allowed cheeses: Cottage cheese, cream cheese, ricotta, part-skim milk mozzarella, and processed cheeses like American, if refrigerated for no more than 2 to 3 weeks)
- All improperly stored meats, fish and poultry
- Air-dried sausages such as pepperoni, summer "dry" sausage, pastrami, and mortadella
- Soy sauce and other soybean condiments such as soybean paste, fermented bean curd (fermented tofu), and miso soup

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- Sauerkraut
- All tap beers

**FOODS TO LIMIT TO NO MORE THAN 2 SERVINGS PER DAY  
(only if approved by the patient's physician)**

- Wine (one serving = 4 ounces)
- Bottled or canned beer (including non-alcoholic) (one serving = 12 ounces)
- Liqueurs or distilled spirits (one serving = 1 ½ ounces)

**References**

McCabe, Beverly, J.: Dietary tyramine and other pressor amines in MAOI regimens: a review. JADA 86:1059, 1986

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